1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

with dyed plumes or tufts of horsehair, as the Arapaho so frequently do both at the base and top of the feather. Feathers with the vanes cut from the quill, except at the very top, are also scarcely used by the Gros Ventre. Instead, they usually cut the feather squarely off across its end, or split the quill, from the end down, for the greater part of its length. Sometimes the uppermost part of the quill is entirely removed, with its attached portions of the vanes, leaving the top of the feather forked. Plume-feathers are also much less used by the Gros Ventre than by the Arapaho. In dyeing, the Gros Ventre generally used cruder colors; a blue-violet, a pink-red, a light-bluish green, and yellow, all of them aniline colors, being the most common. The Arapaho use true red and green more frequently, and in most cases employ the dyes more lightly, thus obtaining endurable or delicate effects where the Gros Ventre are garish.

The Gros Ventre methods of feather-treatment, both the cutting-off and the splitting of the end of the feather, go back, at least in part, to their older tribal ceremonies. Both these processes are found employed on the dog-dance regalia described.

As regards other differences, the Gros Ventre probably employ more weasel-skin in ornaments than the Arapaho, though far less than their neighbors the Blackfeet. They use cloth (both cotton and woollen goods), red, green, or blue, without reluctance; whereas the Arapaho have clung very tenaciously to skin in all ceremonial objects. Skin thongs and sinew for binding are, however, very rarely replaced by strings and thread, even with the Gros Ventre.

The few objects obtained belonging to the ghost-dance movement are the following.

Fig. 41 shows an imitation of a netted playing-wheel. The piece is about two inches in diameter. The stitch of the meshes seems to be correct, though there are fewer meshes than in the full-sized wheels. The "crow," the centre mesh, is painted red; the rest of the thong, yellow. To the centre mesh are attached four magpie-feathers cut off across. This object was worn tied to the hair on the side of the head, or hanging from the little finger when the people joined hands to dance. Several very similar objects, lacking the feathers, are attached to the girl's painted dress shown in "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, Plate LXXV).

A head-dress consisting of a hoop of about the same size, quill-wound and bisected by two quill-wound strings, and of three long, blue-and-white quill-wound pendant thongs with plume-feathers at the ends, was collected by Dr. Clark Wissler. It is not known whether it belongs to the war-dance or the ghost-dance: its general similarity to certain Arapaho head-dresses

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

When people were called to come to sweat, hixtcib'nix'a"t ("Above-Nix'a"t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a"t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixteib'nix'a"t or to iiçanânin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1903 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably Ammonite septa. - Analyst]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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281 successfully hunted than antelope. While the finest clothing was
291 made from deer, elk was preferred for some purposes such as
[825] moccasins and warm shirts and coats—it being more durable but not equally as flexible.

291 For winter wear, caps and mittens of beaver or otter were made for men and boys. Beaver skin served as a breech clout for the men in winter, although antelope was preferred for this purpose the rest of the year, unless cloth were available, since the latter was more comfortable than hide which chafed the skin so badly.

292 Ordinarily unornamented clothing was worn, but for special
● 301 events, particularly when the whole tribe was together, everyone
237 dressed in his best. Being well-dressed was as important to the Gros Ventres as being well-mounted on ceremonial and social occasions. The effect on both the eye and the ear was taken into account in the ornamentation. Dyed porcupine quill embroidery lent color, and mica—first heated, then powdered and rubbed over a robe—glistened beautifully. Polished deer-hoofs as edging for a robe or dangling from leggings or garters "made such a nice sound when one walked." This feeling both for color and sound was carried over when material from the whites was at hand, beadwork tending to supplant the quill embroidery and scraps of bright colored cloth and of metal serving as "dangles." [18]

Elk teeth, however, were said to be "the greatest decoration of the Gros Ventres." They were used principally for girls' and women's dresses. Not so long ago there was a man at Hays who wore a vest trimmed with elk teeth, and people would say to him: "You crazy thing, only women have that kind of decoration!" But he was unconventional and would retort: "Well, I dance, too, and I want to look nice." Everyone would laugh, but he persisted
[727] in wearing that vest. Human hair as fringe and on moccasins was proudly worn by men who had taken scalps.

292 Mink, otter, weasel, muskrat and kit-fox were all used as trim-
237 mings, and occasionally the whole pelt of mink, otter or muskrat was made into a bag, or tobacco pouch, or other small container. Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red

[18] For the detailed comparative analysis of Decorative Art of the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 151–79.

Feathers, especially eagle feathers, were highly prized, and red paint, prepared from ochre, as well as other paints obtained through the trader, played their part in bodily decoration.

The younger men thought a great deal of their appearance. One of the things they made for themselves was fancy painted sunshade-hats of rawhide. The designs painted thereon had a yellow background against which various other colors stood out. Coming Daylight remarked: "These sunshades looked so fine that the other tribes copied them, just like the whites get their styles from Paris." Long thick hair was the ideal both for men and for women. The tail of the porcupine made an admirable comb. A number of perfumes were used by the young men. The castor of the beaver, for instance, was put in the paint bag so that the material for daily painting would be sweet smelling. Again, young men crushed "Piegan berries," chewed them, and rubbed them on hair, horses, and bedding, as perfume.

Incidentally, according to Coming Daylight, in order to clean their buckskin clothing, the Gros Ventres would wear it into the water, getting it completely wet, and then rub it thoroughly with a certain kind of white clay.[14] She said that the tribe was spoken of by other tribes as always having such nice white clothes, and to this habit of rubbing them with clay she attributes the name by which the Gros Ventres call themselves, *a'aninin*, "white clay people."

Ear-rings, worn both by men and women, were made from imported abalone shell, which they cut up and shaped; they also used a certain type of imported white shell. Many other kinds of necklaces, armlets, and so on were apparently used, but on these we failed to get details.

Household and Transportation

The lodges of the Gros Ventres were made from buffalo hides, the number used in each depending on the size of the lodge. They

[14] This custom is mentioned in the sources of the early 19th century. Cf. Harmon, p. 277; Henry, v. 2, p. 734. The latter adds, as a further distinguishing characteristic, that when the Gros Ventres use red "it is always of a light color, inclining to pale vermillion. The dark red or Spanish brown, so much in vogue among the other Meadow tribes, does not suit their taste."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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435 value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how
554 trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same
231 thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

435 The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof
[431] would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to
[237 accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to
307] the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

439 There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called "Matter in the Ear" and another "Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that "Turtle River" became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was "Spotted Calf." 551

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: "That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: "This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.[13] The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: "No. You will hurt her." 304 852 787 301

[13] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
798 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
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2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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PLATE I

LEFT TO RIGHT: LAME BULL, BIRD SITTING, BLACK BIRD AND CROW BULL

(Photo by Don Dutro, Fort Benton, Montana, 1887)

[p. 212 (A)]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ance with given practice it must have been carried away on a hill or elsewhere.[1] 782

[1] In 1948 The Boy gave a detailed description of the rite should the killer of an albino or "beaver" buffalo present the skin to the Pipe, rather than offer it as a sacrifice. He said that in this case, the man presented the green hide to the Pipe with a ritual directed by the keeper and included the painting of the donor. The keeper then called in two young women known to be expert tanners, received them ritually, and instructed them in procedures to be followed in tanning this particular hide. He made a crown, bracelets and anklets of twisted sage for each woman while singing a special song (not recorded by Cooper). When the hide was dressed there was a big feast at the keeper's lodge at which the keeper ritually painted the skin red. The keeper gave the donor of the skin the choice of any horse from all except one of his herd; to each of the women tanners he gave three valuable presents. [R.F.] [28] 301 [431]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

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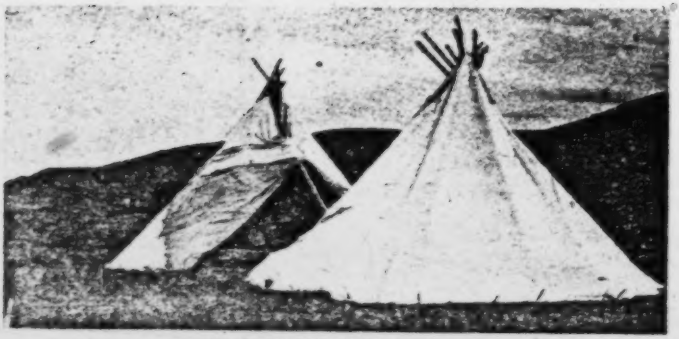

A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

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B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

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C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE I

[p.425]